*Addressed to the Ministry in charge of ESF*

*Place and date*

European Funds 2014-2020: architecture of the 2014-2020 devolved national operational programmes on employment

Dear Minister,

*Name of your organisation* has been working for over *n. of years* to support business creation, in particular among individuals facing labour market marginalisation.

We recently received the statement informing us that the (*national body in charge of Employment and Vocational Training)* has not included business creation among its investment priorities for the ESF programme within the future 2014-2020 devolved national operational programmes.

As a consequence, in the majority of regions support for business creation may no longer be retained as a source of job creation within operational programmes. The implicit suggestion is that ESF will thus no longer fund regional business creation as of 2014.

Despite this, last January the European Commission indicated that in order to revive growth and return to a high level of employment Europe needs to increase its number of entrepreneurs. New businesses are the main source of job creation in Europe, in particular, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) – four million per year. In *country*, business creation is a real means for achieving professional integration and a salient solution for the most vulnerable, on the condition that they are supported with non-financial services.

Within the framework of the European fund programming 2014-2020, the consultative work on employment focussed on business creation; several stakeholders underlined the essential role it plays in job creation. The 2007-2013 programme evaluation team also noted the significant business survival rates for supported-businesses within the framework of ESF co-funded projects. We thus believe it is essential that support for the creation, acquisition and development of businesses be formally mentioned in the Partnership Agreement currently being drawn up by *country* and the European Commission, as well as in the investment priorities indicated in the employment part of 2020 devolved national operational programmes.

Please find enclosed the letter signed jointly by the other organisations dealing with business development, *name of the organisations,* and addressed to *name of* *the body in charge of the consultation on the Partnership Agreement in your country* regarding the drafting of version 0 of the Partnership Agreement which did not retain business creation among the ESF investment priorities.

I hope that you will (kindly) be able to take our requests into consideration.

Yours sincerely,